An Owner's Manual to:

WHAT TO DO IF
YOUR PET GOES MISSING

by the

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

ABOUT THIS SERIES

At the AKC, we know better than anyone that your dog can't be treated like a car or an appliance, but we've named this series "An Owner's Manual" because sometimes you probably wish your lovable companions came with one.

These concise guides give you the tools, tips, and direction to be a responsible and confident dog owner who brings out the best in your dog.
Give them a test drive!

Losing a pet is a scary and upsetting situation. If this happens to you, the first step is to breathe. Being calm and logical will help you make the best decisions to help you get your beloved pet back home safely. Also, having a microchip will increase the odds that you will be reunited with your dog dramatically. Here's what you should do if your pet goes missing:

IMMEDIATELY UPON NOTICING HE'S GONE:

Before your pet has time to roam too far, begin searching within a 2-mile radius from where your pet was last seen.

Gather neighbors and friends to search the area where your pet was last seen. Don't forget your pet's favorite treat or toy, and call out words they respond to, such as "toy" or "treat" along with their name. Shaking his food container (or opening a can if he eats wet food) might be helpful.

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WITHIN A FEW HOURS:

Notify the police and local shelters that your pet is missing. Provide an up-to-date photo and an accurate description of your pet: hair/coat length and color (don't forget special markings); size; age; ear type (pointed, long, short, droopy).

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If your pet is registered with AKC Reunite, call our PET Line at 800-252-7894 to let us know your pet is lost and so we can confirm your contact information is up-to-date. Also, visit the website to create a "Lost Pet Alert."

USE SOCIAL MEDIA:

Thankfully, social media has made it easier to spread the word about a missing dog. Post a photo of your dog with your contact info *on the photo*—this way that information isn't separated from the post as it's reshared. Use all platforms—Twitter, instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, Google+.

Also, many areas have set up Facebook pages for local lost pets. See if such a page exists in your area and send the post there, too.

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ALSO DO IT THE OLD-SCHOOL WAY:

We may live in the digital age, but never underestimate the power of ink. Print out posters with your pet's photo and name and your contact information and post it in your area.

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WHO TO INFORM:

Post to the social media pages and bring posters to the following places (and any other pet-related companies you can think of):

- Local police and fire department
- Local animal shelters
- Veterinary offices
- Groomers
- Dog parks
- Pet stores

BE PERSISTENT:

Visit local shelters and humane societies daily to see if your pet is there. Also call for updates. Remember staff change each day and not everyone working at a facility may know that your pet is missing.

Repost on social media often.

BE OPTIMISTIC:

With all the technology and opportunities available to share information, there is a good chance your pet will be returned to you. Staying optimistic will help you maintain the persistence you'll need to bring your four-legged friend back home.

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AKC OWNER'S MANUAL

SCARY STAT:

One out of every three pets will go missing at some point in their lifetime.

BE PROACTIVE:

Speaking of technology, there are many things you can do before your pet is lost to help ensure his safe return should it ever happen:

TAGS AND COLLARS

The basics first: keeping a collar on your pet with tags that show your contact information, the pet's call name, and proof of rabies vaccination is a good start.

A MICROCHIP:

A veterinarian can inject a rice-sized chip, which when scanned, will display your contact information, including address and phone number, and your pet's information, like name, veterinary history, and medications needed. It's an inexpensive, non-invasive way to bring your pet home.

Tip: *Make sure your pet's microchip information is up-to-date.*

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DID YOU KNOW?

Animals with a microchip brought into shelters have over a 200% higher chance of being returned than non-microchipped pets.

GPS TECHNOLOGY:

Wearable tech for dogs has also become the new necessity for vigilant pet owners. Most GPS collars can allow owners to obtain their pet's location at a moment's notice. Learn more about the AKC's soon-to-be-released collar at wooftale.com.
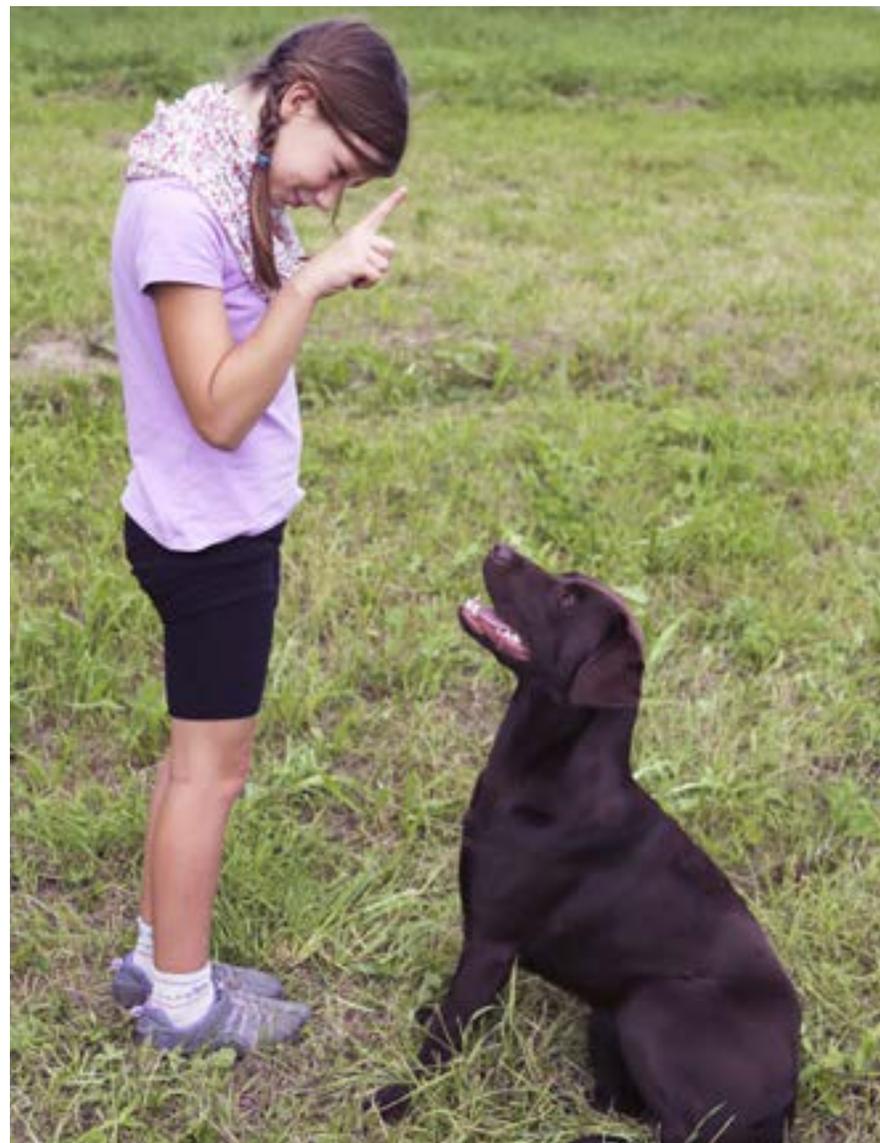

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TRAINING IS KEY:

Ensuring your dog always responding to the command "come" or "stay" can help prevent an escape. Also crate-training can be an effective way to keep your dog secure when you can't watch him. Visit the AKC's GoodDog! Helpline at akc.org/helpline for advice on teaching your dog these lifesaving skills.

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AKC IS HERE TO HELP:

AKC Reunite offers microchips for pets, along with a "lost pet alert" option, posters to download, and more. Visit akcreunite.org to learn more.

We hope your friend gets home safe soon.

WHO AND WHAT WE ARE:

The AKC is a not-for-profit organization and the largest purebred dog registry in the world. We are the sports-governing body for over 22,000 dog events a year, including conformation (dog shows) and exciting sports like agility, obedience, rally, tracking, lure coursing, earthdog, herding trials, among others.

But the AKC is so much more! Here are just some of the ways we support and enrich the lives of dogs—purebreds and mixed-breeds alike—and their families. We:

■ Created the AKC Humane Fund, which supports breed rescue activities, assists shelters that permit domestic-abuse victims to bring their pets, and educates dog lovers about responsible dog ownership.

■ Offer the Canine Good Citizen® program: A 10-step test that certifies dogs who have good manners at home and in their community. Over 725,000 dogs across the United States have become Canine Good Citizens , and 42 states have passed resolutions recognizing the program's merit and importance.

■ Founded AKC Reunite, which has brought more than 400,000 lost pets back together with their owners.

■ Created the AKC Canine Health Foundation, which funds research projects and clinical studies. Since 1995 the AKC has donated over $24 million to the CHF. (The AKC is the only registry that incorporates health-screening results into its permanent dog records.)

■ Conduct thousands of kennel inspections annually to monitor care and conditions at kennels across the country and ensure the integrity of the AKC registry.

■ Offer the largest, most comprehensive set of DNA programs for parentage verification and genetic identity to ensure reliable registration records.

■ Support one of the world's largest collections of dog-related fine art and artifacts at the AKC Museum of the Dog, and we have the world's largest dog library at AKC headquarters in New York, both of which are open to the public.

THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB
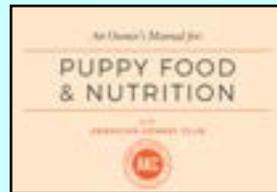
THANK YOU FOR READING!

We hope this information was valuable to you in helping your puppy live a long, healthy, happy life. Below, find additional books in our Owner's Manual series designed to strengthen the bond between you and your furry family member.

THE FIVE COMMANDS EVERY DOG SHOULD KNOW
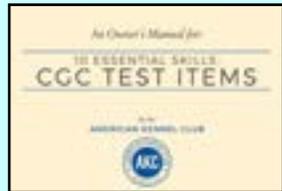
CRATE TRAINING

PUPPY FOOD & NUTRITION

PUPPY SOCIALIZATION

WHY DOES MY DOG DO THAT?
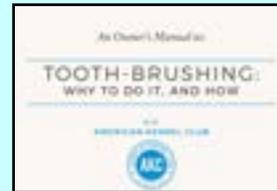
WHAT'S HE THINKING?

10 ESSENTIAL SKILLS: CGC TEST ITEMS

FIVE TRICKS YOU'LL WANT TO SHOW OFF
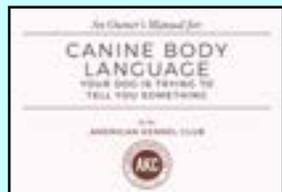
THE ALL-PURPOSE GROOMING TOOL KIT

TOOTH-BRUSHING: WHY TO DO IT, AND HOW

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR PET GOES MISSING

WHAT ARE ALL THESE VACCINES?

CANINE BODY LANGUAGE: YOUR DOG IS TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING

TRAINING WITH TREATS

PUPPY POINTERS: TIPS FOR SELECTING A CANINE COMPANION

MOVING WITH YOUR PETS